

On page 1, after the first complete paragraph, please insert the following section heading:

2. Description of the Related Art

After the paragraph bridging pages 1 and 2, please insert the following section headings and paragraphs:

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The invention relates to a new means for treating ischemic stroke. It is an object of this invention to treat focal cerebral ischemic infarction by administering at least one compound that reduces α_2 -antiplasmin *in vivo* in the form of a therapeutical composition, so that the size of the focal cerebral ischemic infarct is reduced. Compounds of the invention reducing α_2 -antiplasmin concentration or activity are, for example, plasmin, mini-plasmin (lacking the first four kringles) and micro-plasmin (lacking all five kringles). Also suitable for reducing α_2 -antiplasmin concentration or activity are neutralizing antibodies, such as monoclonal antibodies, and derivatives of neutralizing antibodies, such as Fab fragments and scFv fragments.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Fig. 1 is a graph of infarct volume plotted relative to amounts of plasminogen system components;

Fig. 2 is a graph of infarct volume plotted relative to adenoviral transfer of t-PA or PAI-1 genes; and

Fig. 3 is a graph of infarct volume plotted relative to (A) α_2 -AP genotype and (B) injection of h α_2 -AP or of h α_2 -AP followed by anti-h α_2 -AP fragments.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS